

Attorney Docket No. 29195-8162us
SEMITOOL REF No. P98-0001

REMARKS

The Office Action dated 26 February 2004 rejects claims 1-31 as the only claims pending in the application. However, the application currently includes claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-11, 13-17, and 24-95, listed above. It appears that the Examiner may be examining the claims as originally filed in the application, but this application has been amended thrice – on 13 June 2001, on 1 October 2001, and again on 20 December 2002.

As the present Office Action does not relate to the current claims, the undersigned does not believe any substantive response to the stated grounds of rejection is necessary. To avoid any unnecessary extension fees, the undersigned asks the Examiner to promptly call him at (206) 359-3848 if the Office for some reason expects a substantive response. The undersigned also asks the Office to issue issuance a new Office Action that takes into account the two amendments filed in 2001 and sets a new period for response.

Finally, the undersigned asks that the Office take prompt action to advance prosecution of this application from this time forward. This application was filed in February 1998 and allowed in July 2001. The undersigned filed an RCE and amendment on 1 October 2001 and met with Examiner Deven Collins a week later. The present Office Action is the first substantive communication in the ensuing 30+ months, but it examines the claims as filed six years ago instead of the current claims. In essence, the undersigned is still awaiting the first substantive Office Action on an RCE filed more than two-and-a-half years ago.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: 26 May 04

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